



DRAFT

## **BEST: Michigan Avenue Project – July 8, 2015 Technical Committee Meeting Notes**

<b>Subject</b>	BEST: Michigan Avenue—Technical Committee
<b>Date</b>	Wednesday, July 8, 2015
<b>Time</b>	2:00 PM to 3:30 PM
<b>Location</b>	City of Dearborn Council Chambers, 16901 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn, MI
<b>Attendees</b>	Project Team and members of the BEST: Michigan Avenue Technical Committee (attendees are listed at the end of the notes)

The Technical Committee meets on the second Wednesday of each month, at the same time and location. Every third month the BEST: Michigan Avenue Policy Committee will jointly attend the meeting.

### Agenda

1. Welcome to the meeting by Dan Meyers, Project Manager, AECOM
  - a. Attendees of the meeting were asked by Mr. Meyers to introduce themselves and the agency they were representing. 14 committee members in total were in attendance.
2. Project Update, Dan Meyers:
  - a. Mr. Meyers updated the committee members of progress made by the project team on the study. He also informed the committee that the project team would present a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) by the end of the year. A committee member asked if the team would present the comments received for the Purpose and Need documents. Mr. Meyer responded that the team will be presenting the comments once they are all received.
3. Recap from Last Meeting
  - a. Dan Meyers discussed the following in a brief recap of the June 10, 2015 meeting:
    - Committee Priorities
    - Overview of early community engagement activities & feedback
    - Summary of Existing Conditions Technical Memoranda
    - Introduction to the Purpose & Need Framework
    - Draft Project Purpose and Need Framework
4. Public / Stakeholder Involvement Activities
  - a. Caitlin Malloy-Marcon from LSL Planning discussed the stakeholder and agency meetings that have been conducted with communities and other entities along the Michigan Avenue Corridor. Ms. Malloy-Marcon also discussed continuing community engagement that the project team has been involved with throughout the summer, held at local events in the Corridor Communities.
  - b. Ben Stupka from the Regional Transit Authority added to the discussion by giving the details for a region wide survey about transit and people’s view on it. The survey will ready this fall and will be distributed throughout the four county region.



- c. Dan Meyers asked the committee members if there were any events missing from the summer community engagement. Khalil Mogassabi asked if there were any other business associations involved or pursued in Southwest Detroit besides Corktown. Eric Dryer from AECOM responded that the project team was actively trying to get involved with some of the events in Southwest Detroit. Mr. Mogassabi responded that he may be able help with getting the project team a table set up at some events. Jean Paul Minear from the Wayne County Airport Authority mentioned that Willow Run has an airshow event that the project team is welcome to attend. Eli Cooper from the City of Ann Arbor asked if the project team would be attending the Ann Arbor Art Fair. Mr. Dryer responded that all the tables were full when the project team was setting up the events. Mr. Cooper responded that he may be able to get the team a spot at another City affiliated table.

Paul Lippens from Inkster suggested that the Inkster City Council is interested in having the project team come to a city council meeting and discuss the project. The Inkster Mayor is especially interested in the study alternatives.

After the discussion, Robert Polk from the RTA CAC asked if the project team was doing anything about gentrification. Various team members responded that the project is still in the study stage and gentrification is not much of an issue until the investment actually comes and this may be more of a topic for the next phase of the study. The team also responded that the purpose of this type of community engagement is to get the opinions of residents now.

#### 5. Revised Draft Purpose and Need

- a. Julia Suprock from AECOM gave the Technical Committee an overview of the Purpose and Need for the Michigan Avenue project. A series of infographics were presented to graphically present the Purpose and Need's themes. Comments from the committee were made to make the infographics clearer and related more to the Purpose and Need Statements.
- b. Following the Purpose and Need Discussion, Barry Murray of Dearborn asked MDOT what their idea for Michigan Avenue is. Gorette Yung of MDOT responded that they are looking at increased mobility for all users and that the RTA and MDOT will have to coordinate modes in the areas with limited right-of-way. She also said that it is too early in the study to know what MDOT will need to do.

Eli Cooper then stated that the project team and committee members need a coordinated and consolidated land use and transportation strategy as part of the Michigan Avenue plan. He said that the Technical Committee should be asking "How can we make Michigan Avenue remarkable?" and not "How can we implement this system?" Mr. Cooper wants to see local governments change their land use strategy to encourage transit use and land use needs to be a big part of the plan. Gorette Yung of MDOT responded that this is a chicken & egg situation. You can change zoning and see how effects transit or vice versa. Mr. Cooper then asked SEMCOG to facilitate the discussions following this study to encourage and plan for Transit Oriented Development along the 3 corridors.



6. Draft Goals & Objectives

- a. Ms. Suprock then discussed with the committee the draft goals and objectives for the study. These are related to the Purpose and Need framework and guide the evaluation of the study alternatives.

7. Draft Evaluation Criteria & Methodology

- a. Julia Suprock also talked about the draft evaluation criteria and methodology for the Michigan Avenue study. Each goal has three tiers that will help to screen out transit alternatives that are not appropriate for this corridor. As the tiers progress they become more specific and detailed.

8. Initial Corridor Alternatives

- a. Dan Meyers of AECOM introduced the initial corridor transit alternatives for Michigan Avenue. Each of the six potential corridors were shown as individual alignments, all using different routes or different modes. Jim Schultz asked Mr. Meyers if the alternatives were mutually exclusive. Mr. Meyers responded that no, the alternatives are not exclusive. Since the corridor is very long, a variety of different alternatives will be assessed. Pranash Gururaja asked if the project team was looking at adding new technology and track to the commuter rail corridor. The project team responded with yes, but the mode choice will be evaluated at a later point in the study. Mr. Meyers added that the details of the ending of the Arterial Rapid Transit alignment are still needed.
- b. Paul Lippens of Inkster asked to have an additional alternative added to the list. He would like to see a spur to airport down Middlebelt Rd., instead of taking Merriman Rd. This alternative will eventually come into DTW at the south end of the airport. Mr. Lippens said that there is also better opportunities for Transit Oriented Development along Middlebelt Rd.

Following the alternatives discussion, Khalil Mogassabi of the City of Detroit asked the project team if he, and others, can have separate meetings with the consultants. Mr. Meyers responded that, yes, the project team would like to meet with the individual entities, and has been meeting with many of the other communities. Since the City of Detroit was unable to make it other meetings, the project team will be in contact with Mr. Mogassabi to set up a meeting.

9. Next Meeting/ Next Steps

- a. Dan Meyers gave the details of the next Technical Committee meeting and addressed some of the next steps, including more stakeholder and community involvement, starting development of the technical methodology memoranda, and the tier 1 alternatives screening.
- b. Paul Lippens asked the project team to bring a variety of discussion topics to the joint Technical and Policy Committee meeting next month.
- c. Joint Policy / Technical Committee Meeting: August 12 2015 from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM at Dearborn Council Chambers



Technical Committee Meeting Attendees (in order of sign-in sheet):

- Barry Murray – City of Dearborn
- Jim Schultz – MDOT
- Gorette Yung – MDOT
- Andy Thonce – SMART
- Paul Lippens – City of Inkster
- Eli Cooper – City of Ann Arbor
- Melissa Hightower – SMART
- Robert C Polk – RTA CAC
- Khalil Mogassabi – City of Detroit
- John Paul Minear – Wayne County Airport Authority
- Tim Keyes – City of Romulus
- Alex Bourgeau – SEMCOG
- Julia Roberts – AAATA
- Prashanth Gururaja – RTA CAC